

NORTHERN JUNKET



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Michael & Mary Ann Herman have moved. Their new address is: P.O. Box 2305, North Babylon, N.Y. 11703.



TAKE IT OR LEAVE IT

I'm sorry for the delay between issues. From the middle of June until mid-December I traveled some 40,000 miles teaching at camps and weekends all over the country plus a week in Nova Scotia. Well it might have been the last hurrah and if it was, then I went out in style!

December 6, 1930,
I called my first dance. It was a near disaster! There were no caller's schools then. You made it on your own or you didn't make it. That first evening I had to do a whole evening of calling. I'm not one to gloat but I sometimes wonder how many of the modern-day callers would react to a similar situation!

It helped to come from a dancing family and to have an uncle who was a good caller. He helped me a great deal - by telling me what I was doing wrong!

A lot of water has gone over the dam and out to sea in the last fifty years. Some of it I was glad to see go; some of it I'd like to see again.

It's nice to see the interest in contra dances growing day by day. It's nice to see new contras being created - I'm all for it. But let's keep most of the modern-day gimmick calls out of them.

It's nice to see and hear many nice new tunes for contras too. Most of them written in traditional style and form. We MUST progress - but let's keep it sane, shall we?

A Happy New Year to all.

Best wishes

Ralph

KEEPING IT CLEAN IN BOONVILLE



by YW SKEPTIC

Keeping what clean? Your face? Hands? Nose? No! to all of them. The "one beat" is the subject. Keep it clean, it belongs to the dancers.

So said Dick Leger time and again to 18 aspiring callers from Florida to Ontario, Ohio to Massachusetts. These men and women had journeyed to Boonville (where is that?) New York for Dick's annual Caller's School held at Rocky's Campground.

Each day from 9 to 1; 7 to 11 callers were put through their paces to develop their timing, phrasing and execution of simple prompt calls until they became automatic. The concentration was intense; the slips hilarious; the progress beautiful to observe.

When not calling the aspirants were dancing so others could practice. No one could complain that there was not enough dancing. (A personal note - my feet still ache!). Dancers also had to learn not to move when the call was not properly placed - an education in itself.

Through all this hard work a spirit of cooperation and camaraderie emerged which added greatly to the learning experience. As a long-time caller I was skeptical, blasé - "show me". I was shown. I believe I had more fun than anybody and left Boonville with more inspiration than I had experienced since Ralph and Rod encouraged me years ago.

If you really want to learn the basics of calling, really want to work, can accept constructive criticism, are willing to invest a week of your time, care enough, why not contact Dick Leger, 16 Sandra Drive, Bristol, R.I. for information on his schools. He also runs one at Rutland, Vt.

Believe me, this is an experience you will treasure. The friendships will delight you. Most of all you will be a better caller and dancer, with a greater understanding of timing, phrasing and music. Try it - you'll love it!

ROGER WHYNOT



Musicians Dancers

Please Write

FOLK DANCE SOCIETY OF AMERICA
505 Ninth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10018

Dear Folk Dancer or Musician:

I would like to ask your help in a project I am undertaking to bring folk music and dance enthusiasts closer together.

The project would result in a nationwide directory of folk musicians and dancers, who are willing to get together with others to practice their avocation. This is not an original idea; chamber music players have had a successful directory for about 20 years. Anyone traveling around the country has only to call a listed player and be able to play duet or quartets the same evening.

From our directory, visitors could learn about house concerts, dances or parties that are planned in the locality.

A section of the directory will list those able to perform at ceilidhs or call dances. This is not the main purpose of the directory; our principal interest lies in bringing together amateur music-makers and dancers.

To accomplish our aim, we need people who are willing to contact persons and/or provide hospitality.

I hope you deem this project important and intriguing enough to give it some of your time. I think we could start something wonderful. Please contact me at the above address.

Sincerely

Suzanne Szasz Shorr



GIA Boston Branch holds a GALA CHRISTMAS PARTY, Saturday December 13th. Brinner & May School Gym, 8:00 p.m. Refreshments will be served. English and New England dancing.

CHRISTMAS COTILLION, Saturday, December 20th: Tony Parkes with Yankee Ingenuity plus other friends. Details by calling Tony at 275-1879. Advance ticket purchase only. This will be a great party. Plan to attend.

NEW YEAR'S EVE DAWN DANCE PARTY, Wednesday, December 31. Tony Parkes & Tod Whittemore calling to music of Rod & Randy Miller plus Yankee Ingenuity. Belmont Hill School gym. Admission \$2.00. Punch & coffee served - bring along food to share. Dance all night long!!

TO OUR FRIENDS

'DOWN UNDER'

from the JIM MAYO'S



Our visit to New Zealand was one of the high points of our lives for two reasons. First, you have a beautiful country (even in winter) and the people we met were, as a group, the most friendly and helpful that we have encountered in any of our travels. Second, and of equal importance, was the chance to see Mainstream dancing done well again. The combination of these features provided fifteen days of uninterrupted pleasure for us. Our hosts, Vic and Dorothea Beckett in Auckland and Art and Blanche Shepherd in Christchurch, treated us like visiting royalty. We were fed local delicacies to the destruction of our weight control hopes with kiwi fruit, pavlova and good New Zealand white wines abundantly available. The one thing we had trouble convincing people we really wanted was lamb. You evidently have it so readily available that you don't realize that it is an expensive treat at home.

We toured your country from Cape Renga to Dunedin and loved it all. Our regret was that there is so much we didn't see - in particular on the west coast of which we saw almost nothing. We hope you'll invite us back in a few years so we can see some more of what we missed. Many told us we made a mistake by choosing the Bay of Islands over Rotorua, but I cannot imagine the Bay of Islands being a mistake by any measure. Even in the rain, it was beautiful and, as the Islands crawled out of the mist of the next morning, the beauty my camera captured was even beyond my hopes. In Auckland,

when we mentioned our plan to ride the night TRAIN to Wellington, many of you warned us that New Zealand trains were narrow guage and uncomfortable. We are happy to report that you were wrong. We had a lovely ride and a pleasant meal in the dining car.



We toured on the South Island by car from Picton to Dunedin with an overnight at The Hermitage (in a snowstorm of course). In many places the scenery was much like our own Rocky Mountain area of Colorado and Wyoming -- except the mountains rise much higher above the surrounding prairie in New Zealand. In Dunedin we found that only one of the five restaurants we checked had lamb on the menu so we stayed at the associated motel and were surprised by the small, sweet fried oysters served as a garnish. The next morning our drive up the hill on the frozen rain of the previous night was truly exciting and made us pleased that we had an experience from our own winter conditions. Finally, dinner at the restaurant in the Christchurch City Hall with the Shepherds was a fitting way to spend our last evening -- before we went to Art's class, that is.



We said in the first paragraph that we enjoyed seeing good Mainstream dancing again. Let me explain some of what we told your callers while we were there.

In the United States, dancers in many areas have become very eager to say that they could dance the Plus 1 and Plus 11 levels. This had caused many, particularly graduates of classes in the last two or three years, to try to learn the additional calls of the Plus levels before they have become thoroughly familiar with the

Mainstream calls. The consequence of this eagerness has been a steady deterioration in the dancing quality at Mainstream dances - and even at the Plus level dances - in many areas in the States. By contrast, the dancers we saw - all 65 sets of them (including the class) - were well trained, accurate and smooth in the execution of the calls they know. To us this is far more important than the number of that a dancer knows. Particularly in Auckland, but to a considerable extent in Christchurch also, the dancers knew what they knew very well.

A large part of the smoothness and variety that we were able to provide was possibly only because the dancers executed each call accurately and with a common style and pace that made proper timing easy to achieve. The best square dancing results when the dancers and the caller work as a team. We are particularly appreciative of the help we got from the superb dancing in your country. Your callers have trained you well, not only in the mechanics of good dancing but in the art of dancing as well. In the past decade, we have not seen Mainstream dancing done so well anywhere else. If the Plus levels of dancing do find a place in your program, please be careful to protect and preserve the Mainstream program. The Plus and Advanced programs in the States have rarely been able to provide the sense of DANCING and SMOOTHNESS that we saw in New Zealand. You often the additional programs got involved in the challenge of the geometry and lose the basic feel of dancing. We enjoyed that dancing aspect of your program greatly and hope that you will be able to preserve it.

Thank you for inviting us and we hope you'll ask us to return.

Jim and JoAnn



TRADITIONAL DANCE

& MUSIC IN THE

MOHAWUCK



REGION

by RALPH PAGE

From a talk given October 16, 1980 at Keene State College as a part of their Continuing Education Program in a seven week series entitled "Historic Keene".

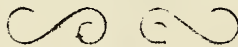
One of the early dance books published in New England "COLLECTION OF CONTRA DANCES OF LATE, APPROVED AND FASHIONABLE FIGURES" by Thomas Carlisle, was printed at the Museum Press, of Walpole, N.H. in 1799. Another early volume "THE DANCER'S INSTRUCTOR, Containing A Collection of the Newest Cctillions and Country Dances" by 'W.J.' was printed in Keene for the Compiler in the early 1800's. The original copy of this manuscript is in the files of the New Hampshire Historical Society, Concord, N.H. Carlisle's manuscript may be found in The American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Mass. A handwritten tune manuscript by a Caleb Chase (probably one of the Cornish, N.H. family) is in the files of the New Hampshire Historical Society.

The first dancing school in Keene was taught by a John Burbank, of Brookfield, Mass. in the winter of 1798-99. In 1799 Burbank published "A NEW COLLECTION OF COUNTRY DANCES, For the Year 1799". A copy may be found in the American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Mass.

The first reference to dancing that has so far come to light is found in "THE ANNALS OF KEENE" by Selma Hale, published by J.W. Prentiss & Co, 1891..... In 1748 Nathan Blake of Keene and a young man named Allen, were exchanged for a young French Lieutenant named Raimbout. On the way home Blake stopped at the home of the Raimbouts. The neighbors were invited; a sumptuous feast was prepared; "wine" to use the language of Blake "was as plenty as water"; the evening, and the night were spent in dancing; the happy father and mother opening the ball, and displaying all the liveliness of youth. To the rough and sedate Englishmen, who had seldom been out of the woods, the whole scene was novel, and excited emotions, to which they had not been accustomed. Fearing that the savages would pursue them, and attempt to release young Allen of whom they had become quite fond, Lieutenant Raimbout accompanied them part of the way. In the beginning of May, 1748 they arrived home in Keene.



This is not to say that Nathan Blake was a dancer. Only to say that he was exposed to dancing and we may be sure that he talked about it after reaching home.



What were the early dances and where did they come from? They were brought to this country by the early settlers, the vast majority of whom came here from Great Britain: i.e. England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales. This was the time in history when all over Europe the English were known as "the dancing English." There is a legend that Queen Elizabeth I, bestowed the office of Lord Chancellor on Sir Christopher Hatton, not for any superior knowledge of the law but because he wore green bows on his shoes and danced the Pavane to perfection. Country dances were the rage in England in the 17th century. The common people and bourgeois

society of the country developed the country dance to its highest point in complexity.



John Playford set down and published all the country dances of England in a series of books entitled: "THE ENGLISH DANCING MASTER, Plaine and Easy rules for the Dancing of Country Dances, With the Tunes to Each Dance." (Now there's a hifalutin' name for a book!). Since he was a bookseller and a musician of considerable ability, he found no difficulty in publishing them. Playford and his heirs published some seventeen editions of the book through the years 1650 to 1728. By the time of the last edition the authors had published some 900 country dances of varying degrees of difficulty. They explored all forms of crossover and interweaving with the numbers of participants varying from four to an indefinite number. Sometimes each couple in succession led through the figures, sometimes alternate couples, and occasionally the whole group "for as many as will" performed the figures simultaneously.



The country dances were the ordinary everyday dance of the country people performed not merely on festival days, but whenever opportunity offered. The English brought with them to America their love of dancing and music. No one will ever convince me to believe otherwise. You see, when you emigrate from one country to another with the idea of taking up permanent settlement in the new country, you tend to take what you love with you and what you hate you leave behind.

Most of our early settlers were Puritans and it is high time someone stood up and said something in their favor. Not all of them were pickle-faced kill-joys! You should read Percy Shole's "The Puritans and Music in

so lists and demolishes the statements of those who for so long have parroted the anti-Puritan satires as though they were history. The indubitable facts go against the venerable vulgar error which insists that they were all blue-nosed-so-and-sos, who hated all fun and passed (untraceable) laws against music and dance. Bad news travels faster and further than any other kind, and it is probably an incomplete reading of the antics of John, Increase and Cotton Mather that started it all.



It is certain that Boston had its dancing schools in the last third of the 17th century. Unfortunately these early day dancing masters seldom, if ever, advertised so that we only read about them when they got into trouble. Carl Bridesbaugh in his "CITIES IN THE WILDERNESS" cites two. The first in 1672, was "put down", no explanation available. The second in 1681, was started by Monsieur Henri Sherlot, "a person of very insolent & ill fame, that Raves and Scoffs at Religion." He was ordered out of town, and soon after Increase Mather wrote his "Arrows Against Profane and Promiscuous Dancing." He reissued it a little later in 1685, when another vagabond, Francis Stepney, chose Lecture Day for his classes and otherwise defied the ministry, then fled town one jump ahead of his creditors. It is not known who ran the dancing school in 1688 when Cotton Mather complained bitterly that parents were more concerned with it than with their children's souls.



Newly appointed ministers of this era were giving "Ordination Balls", the earliest one yet traced was given by Reverend Timothy Edwards (father of the famous Jonathan) in 1694. I have often wondered how the idea

The best dancing masters of the day taught manners, and manners were a minor branch of morals. It was as simple as that. We may smile condescendingly at the idea of our Puritan forefathers devising moral reasons for some thing that is plain, ordinary fun; but if anybody has seen how square dancing improves the morale of underprivileged children as I have, he will know what the wise old Puritans also knew.

A few of the popular country dances of that day that were brought to America were: "Maiden Lane" (1650); "Dargason" (1662) "Jacob Hall's Jig" (1695); "The Gaud Man of Ballingigh" (1698); "Childgrove" (1701); "The Black Nag" (1670); and the big circle dance "Selinger's Round" (1673); a square for eight, "Chelsea Reach" (1665); and a square for eight "Hunsdon House" (1665) whose first figure is step for step the "Grand Square" of modern-day square dancing.



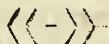
In 1713, a ball was given by the Royal Governor in Boston, at which all the light-heeled and light-hearted Bostonians of the Governor's set danced until three in the morning. As balls and routs (another name for them) began at six in the afternoon, this gave long dancing hours. In 1716, an advertisement in the Boston News-Letter informs us of lessons in "All sorts of fine works, as Featherwork, Filigree, and Painting on Glass....and Dancing cheaper than ever", was taught in Boston.

On the eve of the Revolution there were two assemblies in Boston, one for those with Tory leanings, the other, the Liberty Assembly. The letters of a young lady loyalist declare that the former was reputed to be the best in America. There are frequent references in the diary of John Rowe, friend of John Adams, to brilliant balls and "very good dancing."

The American Revolution was conservative - a preserving of the status quo by keeping the traditional English liberties. The division with England was political, not cultural. Therefore we did not invent a new type of dance, but expressed our revolutionary ardor in new dances of the old type. Such as "Stoney Point", "A Successful Campaign", "The Defeat of Burgoyne", and "Clinton's Retreat" were created by the dancing masters, given names commemorating events of the war, but still keeping the prevalent country dance formation and using English terms for the figures involved.



In the 1790's and early 1800's we began to "Americanize" some of the terms in contra dances. A "hey for three" became "figure eight"; "right hand and left hand" became "right and left" and usually called "right and left four"; "chasse the center" became "down the center and back"; "swing partner once and a half" became "turn partner by the right hand once and a half around", etc.



John Griffith was undoubtedly the best known dancing master of the post-Revolutionary era. He wrote several books of contra dances and cotillions - a direct ancestor of our modern-day quadrille. Two of his best known works are "The Sky Lark", published in Northampton, Mass. in 1799, and the famous "Otsego Manuscript" published in 1808 in Otsego, N.Y. containing some 350 contra dances arranged alphabetically. Some of his dances are still danced today - "British Sorrow", "The Young Widow", and "The Doubtful Shepherd" are probably the best known. Another of his creations deserves more popularity than it has: "The Bonny Lass of Aberdeen". Griffith's version of "Money Musk" is nearly identical with the way it is danced to this day in the Monadnock Region.

The war of 1812 had a profound effect on the dance forms of this country. It was not a popular war in New England; we called it "President Madison's War". There was even talk among us of seceding. The rest of the country fell in love with and took up what was called the "French Quadrille", while New Englanders, especially those living in the smaller towns, kept on dancing and loving the country dances. True, the cities, even those as small as Keene, danced more and more the quadrilles. Not so in the towns like Nelson, Stoddard, Walpole, Westmoreland, Alstead, Hancock, Dublin and Fitzwilliam.



Why did we retain these older forms of the dance? Why didn't we follow the lead of the cities? No one answer comes quickly to mind. We danced the contras because we liked them. It was as simple as that. We were not aware that we were "preserving" anything. Being a contrary-minded people, if we had thought we were preserving anything we probably wouldn't have danced them! The quadrilles became a set sequence of figures. They became more and more complicated so that dancers were given printed directions to the ones due to be danced at any particular ball. Country people preferred the simpler contras that lasted longer. Why bother learning something which was finished as soon as four couples had done the dance? Quadrilles were aimed at deportment, the contras at exercise.



We were fortunate in there being a dancing master the caliber of John Griffith. He was not afraid of pioneering in small towns which had never before known a dancing master. He published books, and many of his dances were pirated by other less talented teachers. He traveled up and down the Connecticut River valley as

far north as Walpole where he had published "A Collection of Contra Dances" in 1799. He called one of his dances "The 'Statia Girl". At that time a part of Keene now bordered by the road "Silent Way" was known as 'statiaville. It is nice to think that just maybe John Griffith knew a girl from 'Statiaville, and named the dance for her.



We have always had talented musicians who knew and could play the correct tunes for our contra dances. That is another reason for our keeping them. Good music is an important part of any dance form.

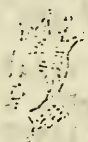
One of the better old-time fiddlers was Sewell Page - a distant relative - who lived in Munsonville. He "got religion" in his later years and stopped playing for dances but he continued to play for his own amusement and I have heard the old folks tell about visiting him of an evening to hear him play contra dance tunes. He used to arrange them in various places around the room so that, as he said, the strings on his fiddle "would vibrate properly". But he was all done for the evening if a cat were to walk into the room.



Itinerant fiddlers traveled the countryside staying the night or a couple of days at various homes, one night of which was devoted to their playing their music for the folks in town. Word was passed around that so-and-so was staying at the Guillow's and this led to young and old making a visit there to listen. After playing for an hour or so the fiddler would "pass the hat" collecting money for his 'concert'. One of the better of these itinerants was a blind man known simply as

and charge an admission to all who came.

When you say that "John Doe" was the best fiddler in the Region you are treading on dangerous ground, because every fiddler worth his salt is the best fiddler in the world to somebody! So let me say simply this: when I was growing up in Munsonville, if you knew that Chester Towne, Romy Farr, Levi Messer, Forrest Barret Arthur Maynard, or Herman Wright, was the lead fiddler in the orchestra, you KNEW that it would be good music, properly played. Later years knew Gene Gober, Lawrence "Rocky" Carroll, Russ Allen, Al Quigley or Dick Richardson to belong in the same category. Today we know that Earvey Tolman, Jack Perron or Rodney Miller belong up there with the best in the business.



Another excellent fiddler was John Taggart of Sharon and Peterboro. His orchestra enjoyed a fine reputation and for many years played for dances throughout the Region. Also, he wrote several fine contra dance tunes, notably: "John A's Hornpipe", "Sharon City", "Russell's Jig" and "Elisha Frederick's Tune". H. Thorne King's book "Sliptown: The History of Sharon, N.H." has much to say about John Taggart, the songs he sang and the music he played.



Charlie Cavender was a gifted fiddler too. A left-handed fiddler it was often said that he could play when sound asleep! Elwyn Varrett of Peterboro was a bass viol player of renown. If he got excited enough he would frequently play Chorus Jig or Fisher's Hornpipe on his bass fiddle.

Locally the Beedle Orchestra was thought by many

to be the equal of any of the big city organizations that were often hired to play for special balls and assemblies in the Region. Consisting of 12 pieces it certainly gave the dancers the joy of dancing to a "full sound". One of the members of Beedle's Orchestra was Edward Bagley, trombinist, who later became famous as the composer of the great march "National Emblem" which has been played by brass bands the world over.



What instruments were used in the make-up of the old-time dance orchestras? From an item in the New Hampshire Sentinel for November 13th, 1879 we read: "Keene Quadrille Band has reorganized for the season of 1879-80, with the following artists: W.S. Parmenter, first violin; F. Harlow, second violin; C.H. Holton, flute; James Spencer, clarinet; T.J. Allen, cornet; M.M. Smith trombone; C.F. Holton, basso & prompter. This would be the typical orchestra of that period. Piano and drums were added around the turn of the century. When I was growing up, a typical orchestra consisted of 2 violins, cornet, clarinet, and piano. Occasionally a bass viol was added if there was sometown in town who could play it.



When playing a set of quadrilles the old-time orchestras played special music written for the dance. This was continued until quite modern times. Favorite quadrille orchestrations were such as "Black Cat", "The Prince of Good Fellows", "Circus" "Queen Bee", "Harvest Moon", "Good Humor", "The Sailor's Return", "Autumn Leaves." And I have heard my uncle and others speak in awed tones of "The Barry Set" and "The Marble Set" of quadrille tunes. I have hand-written manuscripts of the violin parts for both.



BY CHIP HENDRICKSON

Christmas is almost here and many traditions and customs are observed at this time of the year. Not all of these customs are very old and some have changed through the years. I got to thinking about the customs and traditions of dancing and thought I'd pass my observations on to you.

First, to avoid confusion, I'll refer to modern ("western") square dancing as "Club" dancing and the traditional square/ contra and country dancing as "Country/Contra" for the rest of this article. This is not a scoring event, but what I think are some interesting ways in which old customs and traditions have influenced the two dance disciplines.

For a start let's consider the tradition of dancing to contemporary music. Club dancing is most certainly keeping this old custom alive. Country/Contra dancing mainly uses music that was contemporary in an earlier period, when the dances and music were first done. The music of both disciplines can be exciting. Country/Contra music being strongly phrased and following that very old tradition.

The use of live music for dancing is, of course, an ancient tradition and is followed closely by Country Contra dancing. Since there were no recordings available in the past one can only use conjecture as to whether or not it would have been accepted by our dancing ancestors. Horns were popular in dance bands in the 19th century and are heard today in Club recordings.

oxo

How about the use of dance books containing music, dancing, set-ups, figure patterns, and the like? A very old custom here, followed by Club dancing (without the musical scores) especially these days but not limited to that discipline entirely. There are many dance books from England covering the 17th and 18th centuries that contain diagrams of the country dance (Longways) and the floor patterns of dozens of basic figures. In the 19th century were numerous American dance books containing directions on how to dance, behave, and lead dances.

oxo

In the area of fancy footwork such as balances, setting, chasses and rigadoons, the Country/Contra field retains more of these steps than Club dancing. Both disciplines make major use of some form of a dance-walk, but from past evidence it was formerly the custom to "foot it" throughout the course of the country dances. Especially towards the end of the 18th century.

oxo

In the area of written codex of behavior and manners, this was heavily stressed in the dance publications of the 18th and 19th centuries. Today, Club dancing puts much written (and verbal) emphasis on these matters. More so, I think, than Country/Contra does. (Please don't read anything into that; I'm simply talking about who puts what into print.)

oxo

Dress codes are an important part of Club dancing, and were often carefully discussed in the old dance books. Particularly in the 19th century. In general they are not part of today's Country/Contra scene. Drinking codes (None permitted) appear in the 19th century books, and are a very definite and important part of Club dancing's program.



The custom of looking at the person(s) you're dancing with was stressed in the 18th and 19th centuries and is an almost universal part of Country/Contra dancing today. Personal observations of Club dancing would lead me to believe that it is not taught or stressed very much. When it does occur it seems to be with the people who already know one another reasonably well.

oxo

Traditionally, dances are done by couples who have been associated with country and square dancing. First the minuet and other court dances, and later on the waltzes, mazurkas, polkas, etc. Today, Club and Round dancing are strongly tied together. On the whole, couple dancing is not very big in the Country/Contra area. but there is definite dancer interest in these dances.

oxo

The term "Limited Basics" crops up in Club dancing publications all the time. In the past it was a way of dance life. At present this tradition is followed by the Country/Contra people.

oxo

I'm not sure that these following items are considered traditions or not but in the past, heavy support

of the contra and quadrille-type dancing was given by the "upper classes" of England and America. In the 17th and 19th centuries these people had the time and money to enjoy activities such as dancing. And they could read and write, and so supported the publication and sale of hundreds of dance books that have preserved the old tunes and dances used by present day Country/Contra musicians and dance leaders. In this day and age dancing is done by all "classes" of people in both disciplines. It would appear that being simpler, these older dances were part of the regular social life of the past and not done as a hobby thing as we do today. With the exception of parts of New England (for Country/Contra) our dance disciplines are specialties now.

oxo

If you want to interpret this article as for/against or good/bad you may choose to do so if you wish. However, I found it fascinating to see that "traditional" Country/Contra dancing holds to so many old and important traditions while leaving "modern" Club dancing to maintain other equally important and old customs.

The best to all of you during these hectic and happy holidays. A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year in the best of the new and old traditions!

from THE NEW ENGLAND CALLER, Dec. 1980



DUST ON

YOUR RECORDS?



Phonograph records attract dust. Any square dance caller knows this, and knows too, that the dust can make the record sound like the Rice Crispies jingle to completely ruin the effect of his favorite singing call.

Manufacturers have come up with all sorts of devices to clean the dust from the grooves and, in some cases, to keep it off the record entirely. These products are divided into two groups - those that can harm records and those that cannot. The ones that do harm usually contain either alcohol, to clean the record, or silicone, to protect it from dust. Don't buy any of them! Silicone gets into the record grooves and clog them; alcohol can damage the vinyl from which the record is made.

Fortunately, these harmful products don't appear to be sold as widely as they were a few years ago. In their place has been developed a new generation of record cleaners that either use a harmless liquid or no liquid at all. These cleaners come in many different shapes and with many different prices - from \$3 to \$15.

— — — — —
OXO

I have tried several of these cleaners and tested them on dusty records. Remember now, these tests were thoroughly unscientific and you may come to different solutions. For what they are worth, here are the names of the cleaners tested and the results.



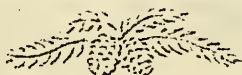
Audio Technica Sonic Broom (\$11). A futuristically shaped rectangular device with a curved, plush-like cleaning pad and a plastic handle. It comes with cleaning liquid. Several drops are squeezed into the plastic handle to moisten the pad. It did a good job of cleaning records but the plastic handle was awkward to hold.

Sound Saver Classic 1 (\$10). It has a velvet-like pad and a heavy plastic handle. Comes with liquid that was squeezed into a hole on top of the handle. Also has a sponge to wipe dust from the pad. Instructions included with the cleaner said the record should not be cleaned until the liquid had been allowed to seep through the pad for 30 minutes. This seemed an unnecessary delay, but the instructions said liquid did not have to be reapplied for two weeks.

Disc Washer (\$12). It came with a wooden handle and a pile pad. Also has a small container of fluid, a brush to clean the pad, and a comprehensive instruction booklet. Did a good job of removing dust. Liquid had to be applied to the pad every time a record was to be cleaned. It seemed to be the easiest to use, since it was lighter than the Sound Saver and less awkwardly shaped than the Sonic Broom.

The Disc Washer was my favorite, although both the Sound Saver and the Sonic Broom cleaned the records well. It also seems to be more readily available at more stores than any of the others. Disc Washer replacement fluid also seems easier to obtain.

As stated before - the tests were not scientific. The prices seem high but placed against the cost of records they are not exorbitant. At the price of LPs and 45s it seems like common sense to keep them clean and useable for a longer period of time.





THANKS TO:

M&M Dan Foley - J. Walker
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 cake
 Roger Knox - 45 rpm "Happy Wanderer"
 M&M Bob Jones - Pear butter
 George Hodgeson - Contra dance music

DIED: Aug. 18, 1980 - Norman Cazden

How do I know
 My youth is spent?
 My get up and go
 Has got up and went.
 But still I can grin
 When I think where it's been.



CONTRA DANCE

TED'S WHIM

An original contra by Ted Sannella

Couples 1 - 3 - 5 - etc. active

Cross over before dance starts

Music: Any tune you think appropriate

All go forward and back

All pass thru, turn alone, swing the one now below

Right and left thru across the set

(Don't right & left back)

Same four circle left once around

Back with a left hand star

Same two ladies chain over and back

xox

Applejack invites you to his 5th annual New Year's Eve Dawn Dance, December 31, 1980 at 8:00 p.m. at Gibson Aiken Center, 207 Main St. Brattleboro, Vt. Tickets - \$6.50 at the door or \$5.50 in advance. Available until Dec. 21 from Applejack, Box 67, Putney, Vt. 05154

xox

If you are a lover of Traditional New England dancing, you MUST attend the CHRISTMAS COTILLION, Saturday, Dec. 20, 1980, at Brimmer and May School, Middlesex Rd. Chestnut Hill, Mass. An evening of music and dance of the late 19th century, led by dancing master Anthony Parkes and featuring Yankee Ingenuity Quadrille Band (Donna Hinds, leader). Period Costume suggested. Jackets (men) long dresses (ladies) required. Dancing 8 - 12 p.m. NO CASUAL DRESS OR JEANS, PLEASE.

FOR SALE

A Time To Dance - \$6.95
by Richard Nevell

The Line Dance Manual - \$5.00
by Grant Longley

Solo Dance Manual - \$5.00

The Country Dance Book - \$5.50
by Beth Tolman & Ralph Page

A Choice Selection of American Country Dances Of The
Revolutionary Era - \$3.00 by Keller & Sweet

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CONNIE TAYLOR - General Folk
Dances

ANDOR CZOMPO - Hungarian Dances

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Ends with the noon meal January 4th, 1981. Once again
YEAR END CAMP will be held in the STUDENT UNION BLDG.
KEENE STATE COLLEGE, KEENE, N.H.

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WITH

GERMAIN & LOUISE HERBERT - French Dances

DAVID HENRY - Greek Dances

CONNY TAYLOR - General Folk Dances

RALPH PAGE - Contra Dances & Lancers

at

THE INN AT EAST HILL FARM

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COST: \$62.50 per person. FOLK DANCE WEEKEND starts with supper Friday night, May 1st, closes with the noon meal Sunday, May 3rd, 1981. Part-time guests accommodated & cost pro-rated. Please send \$10.00 per person advance registration to assure you space.

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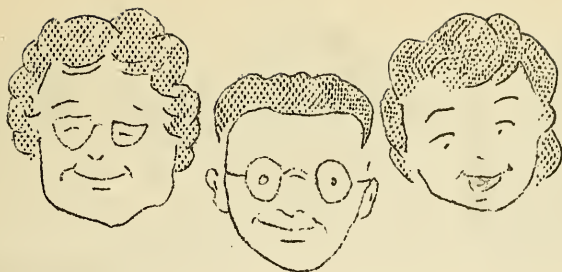
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Tomas O Canainn, lecturer and examiner in Irish music in the Music Department of University College, Cork, has been granted a sabbatical year's leave from his duties and hopes to arrange a lecture/recital tour in Ireland, Canada and the United States in Spring 1981. Anyone interested please contact him at

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NEW YEAR'S EVE

DAWN DANCE PARTY

Squares & Contrabass with Tod & Tony calling to Rod & Randy Miller, plus Yankee Ingenuity.

Wednesday, December 31, 1980 8:30 p.m. to ???

Belmont Hill School Gym, Belmont, Mass. \$2.00 admission



Book & Record

Reviews

A TIME TO DANCE. American Country Dancing from Hornpipes to Hot Hash. By Richard Neville. With illustrations & wood engravings by Randy Miller. St. Martin's Press. Index. Bibliography. 272 pp. Library of Congress Catalogue #77-76647. \$6.95.

A paper back edition of the excellent work by Richard Nevell. He covers the field well, from New Hampshire to California to the Appalachians without trying to blanket any one area. Perhaps he favors New England contra dancing - maybe! But he gives an excellent account of each area. Even includes some nice dance tunes. The wood cuts by Randy Miller are excellent and add much to the book. The photographs may well become collector's items too. Nevell writes history without you being aware that it is history and that is something not every author can do - at least not well. It is dance history without lots of dates and dull trivia. This book should be in your dance library.

NEW ENGLAND CHESTNUTS. Alcazar Dance Series FR 203. Contra dance music played by Rodney & Randy Miller et al.

I cannot recommend this LP too highly! It is the best LP of traditional New England contra dance tunes yet recorded. True, on two bands - Hull's Victory and Opera Reel the back-up musicians tend to drown out Rod's fiddling, but this is nit picking. The shakes, quavers, triplets, and grace notes that he so effortlessly plays throughout the recording are the mark of a master musi-

cian. The tunes are the correct ones for the dances selected. There's even a polka and a waltz with music written by Bob McQuillen who is probably the regions' best composer of contemporary contra dance music. As if this wasn't enough, Rodney plays what I believe is the greatest Money Musk yet recorded by any fiddler to date. When a better one is recorded it will be played by Rodney Miller. Buy it!!

FOLKLORE du QUEBEC. Totem TO-9238

This LP records one of the finest French-Canadian orchestras in the business. Les Sortileges play with precision in a danceable tempo. They play with feeling for the dance. This is an excellent recording of French-Canadian dances and should be in your dance library.

LA BASTRINGUE et AUTRES DANCERIES. Laridaine ML 7902.

An excellent LP of traditional French-Canadian dances played by an orchestra that knows what dancing is all about. A booklet describing the figures of the dances is included. Excellent in every way.

MADAME THERESE RIOUX, La Reine des Violoneux. Catralogne CAT 16005

Madame Rioux is indeed a fine fiddler and this is a fine LP to add to your collection of French-Canadian dance music. However, I do wish that all fiddlers would give up recording "The Mocking Bird" and "Red Wing" but that is maybe too much to ask.





NEW YEAR'S A LA FRANCAISE

by Jean LeMay

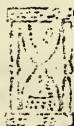
There are three towns left in this country where New Year's is celebrated with a French touch. Appropriately enough, all have French names - Vincennes, Indiana; Ste. Genevieve, Missouri; and Prairie du Rocher, Illinois - and all are within three hour's drive of one another.

The celebration has any number of names. Among them are La Guiannee, La Guignolée. La Gale-Anne, and La Guillonnée. When staged in the best tradition it combines the revelry of an American New Year's with the door-to-door masquerade of Halloween.

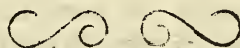
If this double-barreled merriment is the orthodox practice of La Guiannee, then the people of Prairie du Rocher are closest to the spirit of their heritage.

The custom has been unchanged since the Mississippi River village was settled in 1722.

La Guiannée is the name of a song sung during the celebration. Exactly what this title means, and how it originated, is the subject of many scholarly debates, but this doesn't especially concern the group of French residents who dress in gaudy costumes for the event, nor the spectators who follow them from house to house to sing for a pork backbone while a violin accompanies them. Usually, they settle for a good stiff drink anyway.



At each door the leader, keeping time with his walking stick, sings the first verse of the song, after which the chorus repeats it. In the second verse they ask for the pork backbone "to make a fricasee!". In the third they ask to see the eldest daughter of the house, whereupon the host throws the door open and everybody troops in, singers and spectatord included. Inside they form a circle and complete the song. At the end the host has a bottle of wine or whiskey ready. This is passed around.

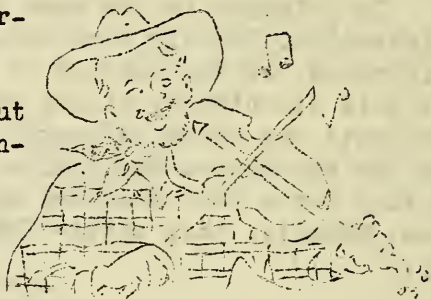


At Prairie du Rocher, the group has learned from experience to bring with them a strapping six-foot trucker named Wendell "Tiny" Sauze, who acts as a sort of sergeant-at-arms. His job is to ration the drinks to the singers at each house. Before this restraint was imposed, the participants used to get pretty badly out of tune by 1:00 a.m. when the celebration usually ends.

A father and son team, Charles and Percy Clerc, are the song leaders of La Guiannée. The function is handed down religiously from generation to generation.

Charles Clerc, now eighty years old, has been singing the lead for nearly twenty years. Charles Bisé, ninety, retired as violin accompanist last year after taking part in the celebration for seventy years.

At Ste. Genevieve, German and French versions of the song are popular, but the singers no longer go out to the houses where the candles burn in the windows. Instead they gather in a local tavern or at the radio station. In Vincennes the custom has been modified in the same way. The general theme of the song is the same in all three places, although in Vincennes and Ste. Genevieve the words are closer to the classical French.



xox

La Guiannee is seldom the same in any community but it has probably retained its authenticity in Prairie du Rocher because the town of five hundred is off the beaten track and relatively isolated. It is cradled at the foot of a bluff overlooking the Mississippi and lives from the profits of a limestone quarry, its only industry, and the harvest of corn and soybeans from the fertile farmlands. One of the things to see in the town is the Brickey House, which was built by Abraham Hagerman Lee who won the Chicago Opera House in a lottery in 1867 and sold it for \$200,000.

Aside from its historic and scenic interest, Prairie du Rocher is at its best on New Year's eve, when enthusiasm for La Guiannee overshadows everything else.



The celebration is thought to go back to the sixteenth century in France. Townspeople there used to dress in their worst clothes and go out to serenade the rich on New Year's in the hope of getting at least a glass of wine free. Some historians think the custom goes back 2000 years to the Druids of Gaul. Variations of the custom are found today in Germany, England and Scotland, where they resemble the trick-or-treat aspect of Halloween. On this continent the only thing like it, except in a few provinces of Canada where the Society of St. Vincent de Paul observes it to obtain money for the poor.

La Guirannée is one of those customs that have a hard time staying alive in our kind of civilization. Down in Prairie du Rocher however, it seems pretty firmly rooted. Hearing the song and revelers going from place to place, you get a pleasant feeling of being in an ancient and unreal world.

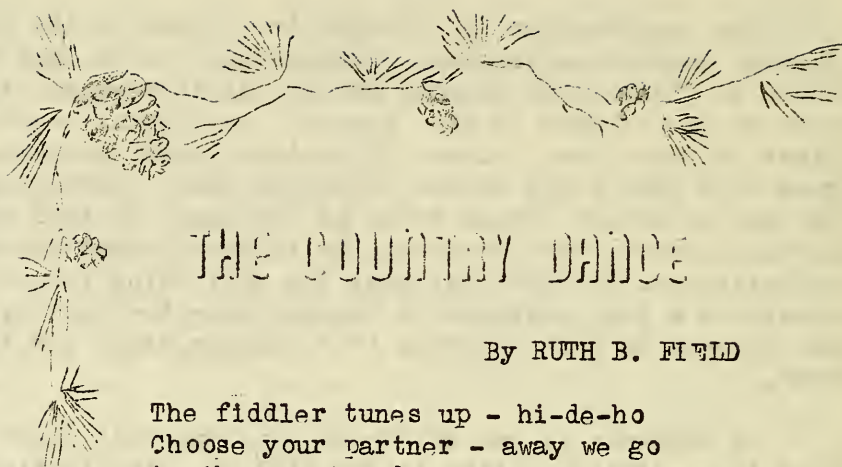


Folklore Village of Dodgeville, Wisconsin has begun a drive for \$20,000 for repairs and improvements to this well-known place of folklore & folk dance activity. Any contributions, large or small, are requested. Send your tax deductible check to Jane Farwell, Folklore Village, Rt. 3, Dodgeville, WI 53533 and take pride in your being a part of a most worthwhile project.

OXOX

Do you like Old Time Scandinavian-American music? Then write Banjar Records, Box 32164, 7440 University Ave NE Minneapolis, Minnesota, 55432 for their listings of lovely polka, schottische and waltz dance music.

XOX



THE COUNTRY DANCE

By RUTH B. FIELD

The fiddler tunes up - hi-de-ho
 Choose your partner - away we go
 As the country dance starts full swing
 While they clap and stamp, the prompter will
 sing:

"Swing your partners all - docey do,
 Grand right and left - don't be slow!
 Step lively gals, boys, now's your chance,
 Squeeze her a bit and on with the dance!"

Down in the Town Hall, you will feel
 The thrill of the old time Virginia Reel,
 The Portland Fancy and The Morning Star,
 Pop Goes the Weasel - stay where you are.

There's more to come - in the evening dusk.
 You can dance The Devil's Dream and Money Musk,
 Whirl through The Half Moon - hear the trilling fife.
 Swing to the rhythm of Old Jack's Life,
 Hull's Victory brings the color to your cheek,
 Sicilian Circle or French Four leaves you weak.

Promenade and swing your miss. Promenade, bow,
 Everybody light and gay - steal a little kiss,
 And when the music starts again
 Don't miss the chance
 To join in the frolic of the country dance.

Ruth Field writes: "The Country Dance lists many of the old time dances which were popular in West Chesterfield back in the 20's. Those listed in the accompanying poem are authentic. A young school teacher at the time, I went with the people where I boarded to attend the Harvest Supper and Dance at the West Chesterfield, N.H. Hall, which was a yearly event. Accustomed to the music of Paul Whiteman and famous orchestras of the 20's, these dances were certainly a switch! Those old timers could out step and out last my generation as they capered and whirled to the "Caller's" demands!

"I also wonder how many infants and children now in their primes, slept peacefully on the chairs around the hall, watched over by older children or elderly relatives while their parents danced, now carry on the tradition of those old dances."

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THE WORLD'S WORST QUESTIONS

Will you promise not to get mad if I ask you something?
 Do you have statistics to back up that statement?
 You don't honestly expect me to believe that, do you?
 Haven't you any sense of humor?
 You don't remember me do you?
 Have I kept you waiting?
 NOW what's the matter?
 You asleep?
 So what?
 When are you going to grow up?

FLOOR

FRIGHT



Floor fright is a common occurrence with new dancers. It has been experienced by most dancers at various times. A dancer will notice the symptoms many times when it may not be observed by anyone else, including the dancer's partner. The most obvious symptoms are trembling knees and trembling hands. It is caused from tension, excitement and anxiety, and it usually subsides after dancing a few measures or phrases of the music. It is one of the problems most dancers cope with and resolve early in their dancing careers. It may reappear under various circumstances, in strange or unusual surroundings or company.

One of the reasons that night club dance floors are dimly lit is to provide dancers with some degree of privacy. Most of the dancers who get up to dance on a darkened floor would sit out the dance if the room were flooded with light. They find a degree of security in the obscurity provided by the dim light. Most dancers also feel less conspicuous on a crowded dance floor. They are less conspicuous. The more dancers on a floor, the less the chances that an observer will notice or concentrate on an individual couple. The more dancers on a floor the fewer the number left on the sidelines as observers. Many people wait until several other couples start before they will get out on the dance floor. They want and need company on the floor before they can dance. These dancers probably experienced the trembles at some time when they were first or among the first couples on the floor.

The best way to overcome floor fright is by exposure. Why fear floor fright? Get up first, walk around the floor, talk to your partner. Don't stand still or your tension will build. Each time you try you will have less anxiety. You will soon reach a point that you are unable to sense any fright. Then try dancing a one couple exhibition in a well lighted ballroom in front of two or three hundred people/

Some people find courage in alcohol. They must be high in order to get up and dance. It may help in a night club because it helps them to relax. It helps them not care and know when they goof. They are less critical of their own mistakes. They are less sensitive about others around them, so it helps get them on the floor. Don't misunderstand. Drink doesn't improve their dancing and they don't learn better, they dance worse; their learning is impaired and their thinking is clouded, but their confidence is bolstered.

==

Don't let floor fright keep you off the dance floor. Dancing is perfected through practice and any figure must be done many times before it begins to feel natural. It must seem natural to the dancer to be done with ease and confidence. The people who get up and dance are the ones who learn how. If you wait til you learn how before you get up and dance you will never learn. Why not get up and dance the next time you have a chance. That's how we learned!

Every time I get to thinking the world is moving too fast, I go to the post office!

The size of the cut you inflict on yourself while shaving is directly proportional to the importance of the event for which you are shaving.

IT'S FUN TO HUNT



New England town histories abound in references to dancing. Here are some researched over the years.

History of Concord, N.H. Page 480:- One hundred and ten couples attended the stagemen's ball in this town on Friday evening, January 15, and had a jovial time of it. The music and entertainment are said to have been excellent.

Page 535:- In the social gatherings of young people, of both sexes, dancing was a favorite amusement. Old Mr. Herbert says 'The young folks always danced, sometimes with a fiddle, and sometimes without, but when there was no fiddler they sung and danced to the tune; 'but' he adds, 'we always went home by nine o' clock.' On particular occasions, such as ordinations, New Year, and other times there were evening dancing parties, in which not only the young, but elderly and married people participated. Although the parson, deacons, and other members of the church, did not 'join in the dance' yet they would 'look on', and admit that there was no harm simply in dancing, though the time might be more profitably spent.

III

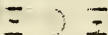
History of Andover, N.H. Page 469:- Hezekiah Blake erected the first Masonic hall in Andover...On the first of January, after the hall was completed, Mr. Blake gave a New Year's party and ball to his friends in town and to some guests from adjoining towns, Dr. Jacob Bailey Moore was asked to make some remarks, and at the close of a brief speech he recited the following

"We've gathered in Masonic Hall
 To welcome and shake hands with all;
 To give our friends right hearty cheer,
 To hail another happy year.

This hall, adorned, red, blue and white,
 These hearts all beating with delight,
 A hundred brilliant, sparkling eyes,
 All tell how much these joys we prize.

Our aged friends have come along
 To join the young and happy throng;
 See every age and class advance,
 Ready to join the merry dance.

So let sweet music stir the air,
 And banish every gloomy care,
 A time there is to dance and play;
 That time should be on New Year's Day."



History of Bristol, N.H. Page 100:- Diversions were few. Public gatherings were confined almost entirely to religious meetings, which may be one reason why the people were seemingly more religiously inclined than now. Later in the season came the paring bees, when the apples were pared, quartered, and strung to dry. After the work was done at these gatherings, a hearty meal was served in the kitchen, usually of baked beans, pumpkin pies, and other pastry, tea and coffee. Then came the social hour, sometimes with dancing, but usually devoted entirely to playing games. All games having fines, and all fines being paid with a kiss.



Page 150:- Washington Inn. Extending from the southwest corner was a long two-story building, with an open carriage shed on the ground and a hall in the second story. This hall was reached by stairs from the east end of the piazza. Here the youth gathered for dance and singing schools, and here were held justice trials, political meetings, and other gatherings.

Page 478: Aug. 16, 1877:- The reunion of the survivors of the 12th Regiment occurred in Bristol. A permanent organization was effected. There was a parade, a free dinner, a large number of speeches from the band stand in Central square by visitors, and a ball at the town hall in the evening.

III O III

Page 491-2:- Old Home Week, 1900. A ball game between old-timers and up-to-dates took place in the afternoon. The band gave an open air concert in the early evening, and a ball at Hotel Bristol closed the day.

III O III

History of Boscawen, N.H. Page 139-141:- Raising the Meeting House, 1791. The raising of a meeting house was a great event, and people came from the surrounding towns to aid in the work.....In the evening, after the frame of the meeting house was raised, the young men repaired to the house now owned by Henry L. Dodge, where the girls, who had been lookers-on at the raising, were assembled. The town had provided a generous supply of food, and all hands after supper joined in a grand dance, which was kept up till past midnight.

III O III

History of Webster, N.H. Page 314:- Isaiah H. Arey 1822 - 1870 was an ingenious and skillful mechanic, and for the last fifteen years of his life devoted much time to the manufacture of violins and guitars. Of the former he is known to have made eight-six, and of the latter, thirty-seven. These instruments are now highly prized. For purity of tone and elegant workmanship, perhaps they are not excelled by any made in this country.

Ole Bull, the eminent Norwegian violinist, recognized Mr. Arey's talents, and assisted him with original drawings and valuable information. From a letter by Ole Bull to Mr. Arey in 1857, the following extract is given: "Allow me to congratulate you on the achievement of your violin.....an instrument that no artist or ama-

teur would hesitate to take to his bosom, and electrify by the breath of his inspiration. I sincerely wish that those further results of my experience, which I have communicated to you, will prove a benefit to yourself and a blessing to those who take your children to their hearts. Your success will always be sincerely felt and appreciated by your friend. Old Bull."

Saco Valley Settlements and Families. Page 152:- Lancaster Hodges, a colored man born in Danvers, Mass. Jan. 31, 1771, came to Brownfield early in life with a family named Jacobs, when the family left town in 1798 of 1800. Lancaster found a home with the Gibsons until a short time before his death in May, 1878, at the patriarchal age of 107. He was the only person of his race in town until 1865. "Lank", as he was familiarly called was a general favorite with all the people in town, and to all the dances and "rinktums" he was invited to be a guest.

Cornhuskin' Page 83:- Supper finished, the extemporized tables having served their "day and generation" were quickly pitched out the door and the floor cleared for a dance. The squeak of a fiddle was heard and the sets formed. The figures were of the old geometrical sort, and the evolutions were performed with muscular demonstration, if not with gracefulness. One thing is certain; the music did not monopolize the noise. The tripping in those days was not done by "the light fantastic toe", for the clatter of heavy shoes was heard as some nimble-footed rustic made the floor smoke with the friction between sole leather and the "norroway" pine while going through the double shuffle. The robust arm cordially encircled the pliable waist without a "corset bone" between and was tangible enough to make an impression; sometimes a depression. These old-time dancers put some buckram into the exercise and made their feet tingle with the rush of rejuvenating circulation while the young folk were "honing down the floor"

within, the old men were gathered together in the doorway were bragging about the courage and prowess of their prime.

We believe these occasions were, as a rule, beneficial..... all the modern sociables, suppers, whist parties, and evening waltzes boiled down to a jelly would be but a drop in the bucket or the dust of the balance compared to one of these old-fashioned "rinktums", or "frolics" enjoyed a hundred years ago.

Page 314. Western Reserve Emigration:- One of their company had taken his fiddle to while away a pleasant hour on the road, and betimes there would be music and dancing around the fire at evening. This reminds me that my quaint old story-teller said his mother, "Pashunce, was a powerful dancer and could tucker down any man she ever met."

Historical Notes, Jamaica, Vt. Page 100:- 1884: Kingsbury's Quadrille Band, B.A. Kingsbury, Leader. Five pieces, and very popular for dances in near-by towns.

and on page 48

SOCIAL BALL
at
H.E. SAWYER'S HALL
Jamaica, Vermont

WEDNESDAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 19th, 1868

COME ALL. BOTH GREAT and SMALL

Your Company with Ladies is Cordially Solicited

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J.A. BUTLER M.F. HOWARD, Wm. J. HOWE

Music - BURNETT'S BAND. Tickets \$2.50 Horsekeeping inc.

Wells, Vermont. 200 Years. Page 7:- Then there were weddings, "House Warmings", husking bees, maple sugar parties with the boiling syrup on snow served with pickles and doughnuts, and quilting parties, when the men came in the evening. Sometimes there was a fiddler and they danced The Virginia Reel, Money Musk, Fisher's Hornpipe Old Zip Coo, Quadrilles and other old time dances. Samuel Harnden was called the "Best Fiddler in the State".

History of Rockingham, Vt. Page 21:- Long chapter on "bi-centennial" - - - floats - - - square dancing with Jim Bradshaw fiddling by Fall Mountain Grange.

Page 55:- Winters there was the big four-horse sled also with lengthwise seats and the bottom full of straw & blankets for sleigh rides and dances at Chester, Cambridgeport, Walpole or Alstead.

Page 141:- The Boat Club. Many dances and good times at the Boat Club but in 1908 it voted to disband and whether not the logs were a contributing cause is not on record.

Autumn is

Broken corn blades drifting in the breeze,
The clunk of ripe apples on the ground.
Squirrels chattering on a hickory limb,
Wading knee-deep in fallen leaves.

We can't all be heroes. Somebody has to sit on the curb and clap as they go by.

While it may be true that the watched pot never boils, the one you don't keep an eye on can make an awful mess of your stove.

Advice is what we ask for when we already know the answer but wish we didn't.



THE WAY WE TALK

The old-timers handed down to us a lot more than a curious (to others) pronunciation. They gave us turns of speech that have become a part of our colloquial English idiom.

When they heard some crony recite a remarkable piece of gossip, they'd say, "Do tell," or "I want to know." Such a rejoinder would be incomprehensible to a visitor from another land, but entirely appropriate in New England.

Some tall tale might bring the response, "It beats all," as a tribute to a gifted liar.

It used to be said of any old-time businessman on the make, "Everything is grist that comes to his mill." It meant that he was a sharp trader. Of some little shaver it might be said, "He ain't bigger'n a pint o' cider." Such a small quantity of this traditional Yankee beverage was considered almost beneath notice.

"He don't amount to Hannah Cook," often heard in the old days, still crops up once in a while. The man who put in his time doing inconsequential chores was said to be "just putterin' 'round." When retribution overtook some evildoer, a village wiseacre was sure to remark, "Chickens come home to roost."

"Barking up the wrong tree," meant that charges laid to John Smith's door were entirely unfounded and the culprit was some other galoot. The zealous reformer who, maybe, was trying to overturn civic affairs might be told by the stand-patter, "Don't bite off more'n you

can chew."

And the political boss, suspected of taking his cut when the contracts were handed out, was accused of "Featherin' his own nest" at public expense. The phrase still comes in handy!

FAD'D PHRASES

She keeps me on pins and needles. It's delish. She's a crosspatch. He's a true blue pal. I'll butter him up. Hold your horses. You can argue till you're blue in the face. He's top dog around here. She's a worry wart. He's a real sharpie. Put that in your pipe and smoke it. and I'll foot the bill.

He's the answer to a maiden's prayer. Who'd a thunk it. It's not worth a continental. If you don't like it - lump it. Hold the fort til I get back. Sure as shootin. He's a fuddy-duddy. It's a feather in his cap and He's a knight in shining armor.

Watch out for the Grim Reaper. He looks like an Arrow Collar man. All is not gold that glitters. It's like gilding the lily. It's no dice. It's the shank of the evening and She's a peroxide blonde.

OLD-TIME SAYINGS

Warm hands, warm heart. Cold feet, no sweetheart. Full lips mean an open, giving, loving person. Thin lips mean a precise, orderly, rigid person. Space between teeth, means constant travel and luck in love. Your nose itches? You will kiss a fool. Your eard are burning? Your cheeks suddenly feel Hot? Then someone is talking about you.



TOLD IN THE HILLS

Every town in northern New England had folks who were known for their story telling ability. By story telling we do not mean liars but recounters of interesting events that they remembered from years past. Men and women qualified for the post. The men mostly held forth on the store steps of summer evenings and around the stove on stormy winter days; the ladies told their tales at sewing circles, quilting bees and the like. A few of the stories were really 'tall tales' and you were supposed to know the difference between one of the yarns and the truth. Ninety-nine percent of the stories were the truth. They were the keepers of folklore.

In the town of Woodbury, Vermont, many years ago, old Abe Smith joined his fathers. On his deathbed, he called in the town Selectmen and confessed that years before he and one Ben Newcomb robbed and murdered a traveling pack peddler and burned his body.

Not knowing what to do but feeling that they should do something, the three officials drove up to Newcomb's farm to question him. The old man was sitting on the porch smoking his clay pipe as they drove into the yard. Ill at ease they approached him and the leader told him Abe's story. A period of silence followed, then the leader hesitatingly asked, "What have you got to say, Ben? Is it true?"

Old Ben stared across the valley to Woodbury and took a couple of long puffs on his pipe. "Wal," said the old patriarch. "It might be, and it might not, but if it is, it's so long ago, it's slipped my mind."

Years ago the old St. J. & L.C. charged ten cents extra for tickets bought on the train. Once an elderly lady clambered aboard just as the train was starting and found a seat. The conductor came along for tickets and she asked of him: "Do you believe a woman should be punished for somethin' she didn't do?"

"Of course not," said the kindly unsuspecting conductor.

"Well, thank heavens for that," she replied. "I forgot to buy my ticket."

Another time a hornet got inside the passenger car making the riders very nervous. One of them asked the conductor to kill it. The patient man said, "Just leave him alone and he won't bother you. I believe in treating him the way he treats me."

"Well", snapped the passenger, "if that's the way you feel, perhaps you can show me how you would sting a yellow-jacket."

Grandma Pettingill in describing a penurious woman once said, "She's so stingy, she cooks the potato that comes on the kerosene can."

Over in Windham there was a rock in the middle of Wilmer Peck's meadow, just under the surface, and he broke his plow every Spring at plowing time. He took the plow to town and while it was being fixed, he spent the day in a local tavern. The blacksmith asked Wilmer

why he didn't remove the rock.

"Goshanighty," said Wilmer, "and lose the only excuse I have to come to town and celebrate once a year?"

In November 1927 there was a terrible floor in Vermont. Dr. Hewitt in referring to the people who lost their homes in Cavendish tells the following story: One victim whose home was swept away was asked "What will you do now?" He answered, "Well, it was mortgaged. I guess I'll let the boss foreclose."

One of our town clerks who has good stories to tell of Maine is responsible for this one. He can give name and dates, but we eliminate them.

In the older days when revivalists bore down heavily on the "hell-fire and brimstone" theory, a certain revivalist discussing the above theme, announced with vigor in his address: "My grandmother was a bad woman and she is in hell."

As he ranted on, one, two, and then three men rose and left the hall. As each departed he yelled to his audience and to each: "There goes a man straight to hell!" The first two made no answer. The third, going out sedately and calmly, turned toward the speaker on the platform and said mildly: "Have you a message for your grandmother?"

Truly the story-teller has long been a fixture in general country stores of northern New England. He belongs to our historical tradition, and may his number never grow less!

Everyone is a self-made person, but only the successful admit it.

DO YOU REMEMBER?

When Zira, Mecca, Murad & Turkish Delight cigarets came in flat cardboard packs of 10?

When ladies wore taffeta silk petticoats that made music as they moved?

The black aplaca coats that were the badge of the preacher? Or that you could buy a new car for less than 500 dollars?

Women spent hours doing up their hair with the aid of rats, switches, and combs?

No home was a home without a piano or organ?

Silk stockings were a luxury and most women wore black cotton stockings? Or - - -

Fellows who wore wristwatches were considered sissies?

Women's hats were an intricate high-piled confusion of feathers, wings, flowers, fruits, straw and lace?

Spring brought the beating of rugs and carpets with a stick or carpet beater? Or - - -

The mandolin was all the rage?

Men wore celluloid shirt fronts and rubber collars?

The stereoscope with its colored cards, was the parlor pet? And women carried parasols of China silk trimmed with ruffles?

When the hallmark of the stylish man was the necktie stickpin?

Do you remember? Really it wasn't so long ago!

One way to make your old car run better is to look up the price of a new model.

The easiest way to keep a secret is not knowing that's what it is.

No one is ever old enough to know better.

A Christmas

Tradition

Oyster Stew



Christmas is a holiday filled to the brim with tradition. Families cling to their customs which make the season meaningful to them. When the tree is trimmed.... the arrival time of Santa Claus....even the delicacies which appear on the festive board - all vary from family to family, from country to country.

A Christmas tradition in Quebec is Tourtiere, a minced pork pie served when the family arrives home from midnight church services. In many Irish families rice pudding, thick with rice and raisins, is a Christmas Eve carry-over from generations ago.

A Christmas tradition in many American homes, especially along the eastern seaboard, is Pyster Stew, rich, hot, and laced with butter. Whether the stew is prepared with fresh or canned oysters, the resulting brew warms the hearts of family and friends. It's easily prepared and casually served in thick mugs. The modern housewife will serve "Goldfish" crackers along with the stew. This is nice; the new with the old makes it sort of a continuing tradition. Personally, we prefer Vermont or Westminster common crackers.

The family that doesn't have holiday traditions for making memories could adopt the serving of Oyster

Stew as an annual holiday habit. Invite friends to partake of Oyster Stew on Christmas Eve and it can become a cherished custom. After all, Christmas is a holiday filled with tradition. So why not start the traditions your family enjoys and make every Christmas memorable.

Here's a good "receipt" for Oyster Stew

2 tablespoons flour	2 cups milk
$1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons salt	2 cups heavy cream
2 tablespoons water	butter, parsley or paprika
2 cups shucked oysters, raw, with liquid	

In a small saucepan, make a paste of the flour salt and water. Stir in the oysters and liquid. Cook over low heat, stirring constantly, until the edges of oysters begin to curl. In another saucepan, combine milk and cream and bring to scalding point. Carefully add oyster mixture to hot milk. Cover and let stand 15 minutes to develop flavor. To serve, place in soup bowls and garnish with square of butter. Sprinkle with parsley or paprika.

If it is necessary to reheat the stew, never place it over high heat or bring it to a boil, as mixture will curdle.

The less important the problem the longer it takes a committee to decide what to do.

There are two kinds of bachelors: Those too fast to be caught and those too slow to be worth catching.

Usually people get what's coming to them - unless it has been mailed.

Why is it that the guy in the third car back is always the first to see the light change?

People who like to get up early in the morning invariably do as the rooster does - crow about it.

WIFE SAVERS

In a hurry to bake potatoes? Put them in the oven, under an inverted iron pan. Baking time is cut in half. Place a length of aluminum foil under the ironing board cover. Heat is then reflected and ironing takes less time and less electricity.

Do you know how much batter to use in an odd-sized cake pan? Fill pan with water. You'll need half that amount of batter.

Use an ice cream scoop to measure equal sized meat balls or to divide evenly into cupcake pans. Store coffee in the refrigerator. Keeping it chilled maintains freshness and flavor.

Cut a used foil pie pan in half to make a throw-away dust pan.

Peel a strip of skin from the top of a baking apple to keep it from bursting.

Hold bananas at room temperature to ripen to the stage you prefer, then put them in the refrigerator.

Dents made in the carpet by furniture legs can be removed with a warm steam iron and a brush. Hold the iron 2 inches above the pile and gently brush until the fibers are even again with the surface.

The best treatment for a rust stain is lemon juice, salt and sunshine.

If you had your life to live over - you'd need more money.

Maybe you can't take it with you, but it's nice to know that there is a place you can go without it.

If you really want to confuse the post office, the next time you get a letter addressed to OCCUPANT, write on it "PLEASE FORWARD."



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Did you know that in the Boston area, you can attend a contra dance to live music every night of the week? A good source of information is the NEFFA (New England Folk Festival Association) newsletters. Write to Jack Martin, 58 Wheeler St. RFD 3, Nashua, N.H. 03060 for information how to get on their mailing list.

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